DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 287 054 CE 048 566

TITLE Urban Job Center for Women. Final Report.
INSTITUTION Middlesex County Vocational and Technical High Schools, New Brunswick, N.J.
SPONS AGENCY New Jersey State Dept. of Education, Trenton. Div. of Vocational Education and Career Preparation.
PUB DATE 30 Jun 87
NOTE 24p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Counseling; *Counseling Services; Employment Potential; Employment Services; *Fatherless Family; *Females; Job Placement; Minority Groups; Postsecondary Education; Role Models; *Urban Areas; Urban Education; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS New Jersey

ABSTRACT

The Urban Job Center was designed to help break the poverty cycle for single parents and their children by increasing single mothers' participation in job training, providing them with such supportive services as child care and transportation assistance, helping them gain access to higher-paying jobs, and informing parents about realistic opportunities for their children. The center's goal was to involve 150 single parents in counseling (while providing jobs or training to 130 of them), provide information to an additional 250 individuals, disseminate information on training and jobs, widen and strengthen the community support network, develop a career group of role models, and quantify and codify the progress made by project clients. From November 1984 through fiscal year 1986, the center served 374 individuals free of charge. Of these, 277 (95 percent) were women. Two hundred fifty-seven clients entered vocational training programs or employment, and an additional 35 are receiving intensive career-planning services. A total of 257 clients attained job readiness by the end of fiscal 1986. The center has identified and trained approximately 30 women to serve as good will ambassadors to the public and as role models for other single parents. They have been trained in finding and using resources, speaking, understanding vocational training options, seeking higher wage opportunities, and presenting themselves well. The center has proved itself to be a valuable community resource. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

NJ 87990 09

23-3150-SPHA-760

RECEIVED
OCT 19 '87
DIVISION OF
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

ED287054

FINAL REPORT

URBAN JOB CENTER FOR WOMEN

II. APPLICANT INFORMATION

A. MIDDLESEX COUNTY

B. 3150 - MIDDLESEX COUNTY VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS AND ADULT TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

C. SPHA

D. MIDDLESEX COUNTY VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS AND ADULT TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

E. SPHA - URBAN JOB CENTER FOR WOMEN

JUNE 30, 1987

CE048506

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E. A. Davis

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. ABSTRACT..... 1

II. INTRODUCTION..... 4

A. PROBLEM..... 4

B. RELATED RESEARCH..... 8

C. OBJECTIVES.....12

III. ACTIVITIES.....13

IV. SUMMARY.....19

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....21

I. ABSTRACT

More than 50% of the national labor force is comprised of women. The majority of those women employed has been in three occupational areas: clerical, services and professional/technical. The Women's movement has opened many doors for career advancement yet most women have remained at the lower levels of these occupations which often result in low paying, often dead-end careers. Many single parents find it diffucult to successfully take on new career responsibilities and maintain home and family stability. Most two-parent families with two-paychecks find it diffucult to make ends meet. The single-parent household with one paycheck is crucial to the survival of the family. As the number of single parent households rise women heading those households will be living in poverty.

The Urban Job Center was designed to help break the cycle of poverty for single parents and their children by increasing the participation of single mothers in job training, support services such as child care and transportation assistance, permanent higher paying jobs and by informing parents about realistic opportunities for their children. Specifically the Urban Job Center for women would involve 150 single parents in counseling, 130 of those in training or jobs, provide information to an additional 250, broadly disseminate information on training and jobs, widen and strengthen the community support network, develop a career group of role models, and quantity and codify the progress of strategies of clients of the project.

The Women's Job Center guides people step-bv-step through an Individualized Education Career Plan identifying interests and needs, investigating job market potential, providing career exploration, establishing a career plan, finding appropriate training in the vocational-technical system's day or evening programs, getting support services such as counseling and housing, assistance with child care or transportation, competencies for getting and keeping a job, retention strategies for completing their education and job placement assistance and follow-up. The emphasis is on "nontraditional" training and jobs, high technology industiris, and women, but the Women's Job Center also welcomes men and women looking for traditional training and jobs.

As part of its public awareness program, the Women's Job Center also provides speakers for parent groups and community organizations that need information on job training, careers,and the wide variety of programs offered by the vocational system. A monthly newsletter is published which highlights system programs, projects and ongoing activities and accomplishments. Parents night, Open House and special conferences conducted at the schools provide the student, parents and public the opportunity to meet with school personnel and observe class activities.

Since the Center opened in November, 1984, 374 individuals have availed themselves of these free services. During fiscal year 1986 (July 1, 1986 - June 30, 1987) the Women's Job Center served 292 people. Of those 277 or 95% were women and 15 or 5% were men.

Two hundred fifty-seven or 88% entered vocational training programs or employment. An additional 35 or 12% are receiving intensive career planning services. A total of 257 clients attained job readiness by the end of FY'86.

In order to stess the options available to females in todays labor market, meetings are held with parent groups. Presentations emphasize the appropriateness of both sexes to enter careers of their choice and to disregard the stereotypes of thepast.

TheUrban Job Center for Women and Parent Outreach Center provides a vital service to the community. It provides women with the opportunity to emerge from the limited occupational areas which they have historically held.

II. INTRODUCTION

A. Problem

Between 1970 and 1980 the number of families headed by women in New Jersey increased by 250%. One-fifth of New Jersey's children live in one-parent families. Almost half the children in families headed by single mothers are poor (Abandoned Dreams, 1985). And in the next ten years, 25 percent of American households - mostly minorities - will fall below the poverty line (Hodgkinson, 1987). In Middlesex County alone there are more than 10,000 single heads of households. This is part of an alarming and growing trend which has caused several agencies to predict that by the year 2000, virtually all the poor will be mothers and their children (Coalition on Women and the Budget, 1982).

The participation of women in the labor force more than doubled during the twentieth century. Women comprised 20 percent of the national work force in 1900; 40.7 percent in 1976 (Reider, 1977); and 52.9 percent in 1981 (U.S. Department of Labor, 1981).

Despite the apparent gains in the number of women employed, their participation in the labor force has been limited to few occupational areas. The majority of women are employed in three occupational areas: clerical, service and professional and technical (Reider, 1977; U.S. Department of Labor, 1981; Weinheimer, 1978). Participation rates published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (1981) indicate that 35 percent of all females are clerical workers; 19 percent are service workers and 17 percent are professionals or technicians.

According to Blaxall and Regan (1976), women tend to be segregated into certain female occupations which deny women with skills and ability, the opportunity to participate fully in the work place. The overall pervasive effect of occupational sex segregation is that women are concentrated in relatively few occupations which are low paying and they remain at the lower levels of those occupations (Blaxall & Reagan, 1976; Cahn, 1977; Reagan, 1977). Hodgkinson (1987), reports that most new jobs are found in the service industries which often have no midlevel jobs, making it difficult to advance.

The wage differential for men and women is substantial. Women earn an average of 59¢ - 64¢ compared to the man's $1.00. That further breaks down to 55¢ for black women and 50.5¢ for Hispanic women. Median family income also indicates a wide disparity. Households headed by men have a medium income of $17,000. Households headed by women have a median income of $7,500 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1982). This economic disparity is due in part to a lingering in equity in wages, but is also connected with specific barriers that prevent single parents from full participation in job training or the full time work force.

The Urban Job Center during its past two years in operation has identified a number of barriers that fall into two general and sometimes overlapping categories: systemic and internal. Systemic barriers are a result of inadequate, inappropriate, or underutilized services and may require a change in what is available, methods of delivery, or providing information about what is available and how to take advantage of it.

These barriers include such problems as lack of information, lack of child care, lack of transportation or inadequate housing. The internal barriers are those psychic handicaps that prevent an individual from self-realization, even creating an inability to function effectively. These include such areas as lack of confidence, fear, guilt about leaving children, depression, and severe anxieties such as agorophobia. These barriers need to be addressed by counseling, support groups, helping the individual to deal with the reality of a situation step by step, providing realistic options, use of role models, confidence-building techniques. These are also areas where systemic and internal barriers overlap and need to be addressed from both a concrete and psychic angle. These include such problems as leaving a battering spouse, cultural taboos and traditions, family disruption caused by a mother working outside the home, lack of basic skills and an inability to take advantage of resources.

The Women's Job Center has found that many women, especially those who haveeither a chronic lack or sudden loss of support, display a noticeable amount of self destructive and/or immobilizing behavior. Although there seems to be only annecdotal evidence of this particular phenomenon, a number of counselors who deal with recently divorced women comment on the large number of them who have accidents, especially automobile accidents. Another common barrier is the "I can't" syndrone. A woman may feel so hopeless, isolated, and frightened that even small barriers become overwhelmimg obstacles, and she can think of any number of reasons why she can't take advantage of an opportunity whether it is training, a job, or a supportive resource.

Resolving this myriad of problems most include quality vocational training for existing jobs with decent wages and a modicum of security and growth potential, solid support services, comprehensive counseling, and a network of diverse organizations working cooperatively so that the whole person is addressed.

II. INTRODUCTION

B. RELATED RESEARCH

The vocational development of females entails unique considerations. Educators have tended to regard the vocational role of females as homemaking or in narrow career areas, namely, nursing, teaching and clerical field. Women are obviously a valuable resource in the world of work, a resource that has largely remained untapped or poorly utilized. A variety of reasons can be offered for this situation. The prime cause is perhaps traceable to the vocational guidance of females framed by antiquated vocational stereotypes and adolescent expectations of the large culture (Laughran, 1987; Thomas & Steward, 1971).

The unique vocational considerations that apply to women are reinforced by Bailyn (1964), who points out that girls must make a choice that boys do not have to make, the choice of whether or not to work at all. What is generally an unquestioned course for men involves considerable choice anxiety for women. Only after a woman has decided that she will include work in her life style, can she realistically make a vocational choice.

It has been increasingly clear that career development theories which emenate from studies of largely middle class, male subjects are inadequate to explain the career development of women (Psathas, 1968; Vecter, 1970).

Recognizing this fact, some tentative notions regarding the work life of women, their unique development stages, their patterns of vocational participation, and the determinants of the patterns have been formulated, but much research is still needed.

The occupational behavior or women has not been treated comprehensively in the counseling literature, largely because women as workers have been preceived as individually transient and collectively insignificant due to the type and level of jobs available to them in society. There are, however, factors that have affected the vocational behavior in women. These factors are related to the socialization process of women.

Occupational sex stereotyping occurs early in the socialization of children. Scholssberg and Goodman (1972) studied children's sex stereotyping of occupations. They found that kindergarteners and sixth graders felt that a woman's place was clearly not fixing cars or television sets or designing buildings. The children did say that a woman could work as a waitress, nurse or librarian. In contrast, they did not feel that men had to be similarly limited.

Gray-Schilberg, Villareal and Stone (1972) studied the resolution of career conflicts by 52 male and 57 female college students and 72 male and 63 females non-college adults.

A significant number of women in the two samples studied were motivated to subordinate their interests to those of a fiance or husband and the men, too, perceived this as the accepted state of affairs. The stereotypes revealed in the subjects' responses reflected strong societal expectations that a women shall be supportive of a man and not seek self-expression through a career. The authors indicated that the removal of economic, political and legal barriers to women's achievement. While important, will probably not significantly affect the occupational status of women unless it is accomplished by a fundamental change in both external and internalized expectations for the "proper" female role.

Suniewick (1971) indicated that changes need to occur in the institutions that educate women, in the world, and in women themselves as they deal with the conflict between career and marriage. She stated that "the obvious finding is that women are not being helped to resolve the conflict; rather they are being asked to accept their roles as wives and mothers and to make their career goals secondary to the other 'natural' functions of women to freely choose and pursue a career when underutilization of women, sex labeling of jobs, women's responsibility for children and family, prejudice against women in the world of work, and other cultural limitations continue to hinder women's equal access to work.

She sees little evidence of change occuring in educational institutions to assist women in gaining access to fields of study normally open to men, although the need for professions and vocations to accept qualified women on an equal basis with men has been clearly shown.

Vocational educators must take a leadership role in changing this trend. It is imperative that counseling and job related services deter stereo-typical job-related behavior. The Vocational Education Equity Study commissioned by Congress in 1976 supports this opinion. Results from that study as reported by Wells (1981), indicate "a strong positive correlation between the sex equity activities in a school and the proportion of non-traditional enrollments in vocational courses in that school". Conclusions of the study also indicate that few schools had undertaken these critical activities.

Further, Wells (1981) points out that relatively few states have made significant expenditures to promote equal opportunities at the school level. Much of the activity that has occured has been limited to awareness of bias and stereotypes and has not been designed to recruit women for non-traditional programs to provide them with supportive counseling and to work with industry to place them in jobs.

C. OBJECTIVES

DESCRIPTION:

The Women's Job Center is an ongoing project with a positive track record which will continue proven practices and when appropriate add some new elements to broaden and deepen effectiveness.

GOALS:

To help break the cycle of poverty for single mothers and their children by increasing the participation of single mothers in job training, support services, and the permanent work force and by informing parents about realistic opportunities for their children.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To involve 150 single parents in counseling and assessment in order to help them plan and implement appropriate goals.
2. Place 130 single parents in job training and help them to stay there.
3. Provide direct information on job market projections. training opportunities, support services, career options and special vocational programs such as JTPA to 250 adults and young people.
4. Disseminate information throughout county on services and training opportunities available.
5. Develop statistics on results of services to 150 clients.
6. Broaden & strengthen community support network for clients.
7. Train 20 women to be good will ambassadors to public and role modles for other single parents.
8. Write final report and replication manual.

III. ACTIVITIES

Procedures for Implementation were as follows:

OBJECTIVES #1: To involve 150 single parents in counseling and assessment in order to help them plan and implement appropriate goals.

The Women's Job Center involved 292 single parents and homemakers in counseling and assessment through the program's Individualized Educational Career Plan which identifies interests and needs through academic assessment and vocational interest surveys, by providing career exploration, establishing a career plan, finding appropriate training in the vocational-technical system's day or evening programs and getting support services such as counseling or assistance with child care and transportation. Along with collection of demographic data the Women's Services Specialist assists the client in identifying realistic long and short term goals and objectives and how to successfully implement those goals. Individual and group work shops were desinged to provide information about vocational training programs and self-worth.

OBJECTIVE #2: To place 130 single parents in job training or jobs and help them stay there.

Two-hundred fifty-seven (257) Women's Job Center clients enrolled in vocational training programs or were employed through the efforts of the Women's Services Specialists. These participants worked out career plans through the comprehensive I.E.C.P. (Individualized Educational Career Plan).

This involved individual and group assistance with decision making, career exploration, job competencies, job search, networking and self-presentation. The Women's Services Specialists assist with enrollment and retention in vocational training programs. They assist with support services such as our Child Care and Transportation Program (C.C.T.P.) which provides stipends for those in need of child care or transportation assistance and who do not qualify for assistance through other support programs. They provide information on parenting, family life education, financial management and assisted or referred for help with problems such as child or spouse abuse, substance sbuse or emotional problems. The remaining thirty-five clients have not yet developed a career plan for a number of reasons including that they have just begun to explore career options, are still in the assessment process, or because they need special counseling or stabilization before they are ready to begin making further decisions.

OBJECTIVES #3: The third objective was to provide direct information on job market projections, training opportunities, support services, career options and special vocational programs such as JTPA to 250 adults and young people. The two Women's Service Soecialist have conducted presentations about the WJC and vocational education to more than 100 agencies and organizations in Middlesex County including the Middlesex County Board of Social Services, the Executive Committee of the Middlesex County School Boards Association, the Rutgers-Livingston Day Care Center, New Brunswick Planned Parenthood Association, the Social Ministry of Northern Middlesex County, the Middlesex County Commission on the Status on Women, at Parents Night in New Brunswick and East Brunswick, the Job Fair at Rutgers Depart-

ment of Labor, the Paul Robeson School in New Brunswick, Project C.A.R.I. Rutgers Mental Health Clinic with Mr. Manzo from DYFS, Perth Amboy Summer Youth Program, Family Service Network in New Brunswick, Women Aware in New Brunswick, the Bilingual Education Committee of the New Brunswick Board of Education, the WRAP group of New Brunswick, the Puerto Rican Action Board of New Brunswick and various classroom presentations at the Middlesex County Vocational Schools. The two Women's Service Specialists have outreached to more than 2000 adults and young people during fiscal 86, far exceeding our projected outreach of 250 adults and young people.

OBJECTIVE #4: To disseminate information throughout the county on services and training opportunities available.

The Women's Job Center published four newsletters with the final distribution being mailed in early July. A direct mail campaign to 1000 1984-85 high school graduates was undertaken in November and a spring campaign to 10,000 single parents in Middlesex County. Eight public information announcements were arranged with WCTC. Two, one-hour presentations on WCTC addressed the issues of "vocational Education and the high-school drop-out" and life-long learning through adult vocational education. More than six news stories were arranged in print media. A revised edition of the Women's Job Center "Invitation to Change Your Life" has been published and 5000 have been distributed at presentations, community bulletin boards, local businesses and community resource centers such as libraries, adult evening schools, health centers and support agencies.

OBJECTIVE #5: To develop statistics on results of services to 150 clients.

Statistics on results of services to 292 clients is an ongoing process which starts with an initial interview. Demographic data is collected via the SPH Intake Interview Form, Participant Survey, Retention Plans, Twelve Month Follow-Up Survey and Program Leavers Survey Form. An Activity Log is also maintained to record the number of participants who utilize each service each day. The Women's Job Center has provided assessment and personal counseling to 292 participants. The Women's Services Specialist met with clients for 244 transportation sessions, 297 child care sessions, 486 personal counseling sessions and 256 job competency sessions. Two-hundred fifty-seven (257) Women's Job Center clients were enrolled in vocational training programs or employment while another 35 remain in our Intensive Career Planning Program.

OBJECTIVE #6: To broaden and strengthen the community support network clients.

The Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools Women's Programs Advisory Committee represents a wide spectrum of agencies, employers, clientele, and resources. Together with the Women's Program Specialists they provide a network of referral, outreach to our communities, public relations, support services and employment.

The Advisory Committee met four times on September 24, 1986, February 20, 1987, March 31, 1987 and May 13, 1987.

Dr. J. Henry Zanzalari, Superintendent, Middlesex County Vocational Technical Schools

Dr. Karen McCloud, Principal-New Brunswick Vocational-Technical School, Director of Women's Programs, Middlesex County Vocational-Technical Schools

Angela B. Mackaronis, Director, Middlesex County Board of Social Services

Betty Street, President, Middlesex County Council of Parent and Teacher Association, Inc.

Debra Wells, Social Worker, Middlesex County Board of Social Services

Gregory J. Levine, Assistant Administrative Supervisor, Middlesex County Board of Social Services

Jay Ziznewski, Esquire, Toolan, Abbott, Domenichetti, Ziznewski

Julie Figuero, President, Puerto Rican Women's Club

Karen Glass, CAPS Social Worker

Lawrence H. Krampf, President, Krampf Communications

Lydia Trinidad, Executive Director, Puerto Rican Association for Human Development

Yvette Fordham, Civic League of Greater New Brunswick

Yvonne Campis, Outreach Daycare Coordinator, Puerto Rican Association for Human Development

OBJECTIVE #7: To train 20 women to be good will ambassadors to public and role models for other single parents.

The Women's Job Center actively identified approximately thirty women most appropriate for this role. They have been trained on finding and using resources, speaking, vocational training options, higher wage job opportunities and self presentations. More than twenty were trained for a video production for project SERVE and were interviewed and video taped for that production. Another six Women's Job Center clients actively participated in Open House and the Black Women's Forum activities.

Many of these women have become our good will ambassadors as they outreach to their individual communities.

OBJECTIVE #8: Write final report and replication manual.

Information was collected from the Women's Job Center clients in various ways. The intake interview form generated personal demographic data. Achievement tesrs were used to collect and measure academic ability. Career skills surveys provided insight and direction for the clients educational and career plans. Participant surveys indicated their satisfactions with the support services and vocational training programs. The program leavers survey was used to collect information about their decisions to leave the program and additional services the program could have offered. Six and twelve-month follow-up surveys collected data regarding their education, employment status and overall program satisfaction

The components of the Women's Job Center have been produced in print material and are available for review and replication as a successful model single parent and homemaker project.

IV. Summary: In order to break the cycle of poverty that so many women, especially single heads of households, find themselves in, it is necessary to overcome barriers to access training for higher paying jobs. The Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools-WOMEN'S JOB CENTER, in its third year of operation is successfully accomplishing its goal. It is providing information, exploration of options, career and support counseling, placement and retention in training and jobs.

In 1985 the Women's Job Center served 122 Middlesex County residents. Of those served,. 88 entered training programs or employment, while 34 received intensive career planning. In 1986 those figures more than doubled to 252 and with 237 entering training programs or employment and 13 continuing intensive career planning.

This year from July 1, 1986 to June 30, 1987 the Women's Job Center has served 292 Middlesex County residents with 257 entering vocational training programs, or employment.

There is a need in preparing people to lead a productive and full life, to address the whole person, taking note of weakness as well as strengths, meeting the person wherever they work and encouraging self-worth.

Working together with the client is very important. The Women's Job Center like its parent the Middlesex County Vocational-Technical Schools, makes a conscious effort to help clients make connections for all the services they need, to build their own networks, and to learn for themselves how the opportunities of the Vocational Training Programs can help them become self-sufficient.

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bailyn, L. Notes on the role of choice in the psychology of professional women. Daedalus, 1962, 700-712.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1981,1985,1986.

Gray-Shellberg, L. Villareal, S., & Stone, S. Resolution of career conflicts: The double standard in action. Paper presented at the 80th Annual Convention of the APA, Hawaii, 1971.

Loughran, G. Women: Her career counseling- is it current? Counseling and Values, 1975, 19, 174-181.

Psathos, G. Toward a theory of occupational choice for women. Sociology and Social Reasearch, 1968, 52, 253-268.

Schlossberry, N.K., & Goodman, J.A. woman's place: Children's sex stereotyping of occupations. Vocational Guidance Quarterly, 1972, 20, 226-270.

Suniewich, N. Beyond the findings: Some interpretations for the future. In Astin, H.S., Suniewich, N., & Dwech, S. Women: A bibliography on their education and careers. Washington, D.C.: Human Service Press, 1971, 11-26.

Vetter, L. Planning ahead for the world of work: Woman's career patterns and their implications. American Vocational Journal, 1970, 45, 28-30.

Wells, J Towared equal opportunity: Sex Equity, mandate the programs Voc. Ed, 1981, 56, 49.

ADDITIONAL SOURCE

USA TODAY, Minorities, school and jobs: A grim forecast. Harold Hodgkinson, American Council on Education, Survey for the Business-Higher Education Forum, 1987.